Last Safe House, A Story Of the Underground Railroad

Late one night in 1856, a mysterious "package" arrives at Johanna Reid's family home in St. Catharines, Ontario. It is 11-year-old Eliza Jackson, a runaway slave from a southern plantation.

The Last Safe House is a fascinating history of the Underground Railroad, it tells the story of two young girls. One of the girls is Eliza, a runaway slave, and Johanna, whose family gives her refuge. They become friends together through there long journey of escaping. For Eliza, who has recently become separated from her mother and brother, the Reids' home in Canada is the last safe house at the end of a long road to freedom. Twelve-year-old Johanna, however, sees Eliza merely as an unwanted guest, that is, until she listens to the girl's account of her family's terrifying flight to north Canada. The story is fictional, but the details of the Underground Railroad are real, right down to the area in Canada where the story is set to the routes escaped slaves took to get there. In the book, slave catchers would cross into Canada and try to take slaves back when they had no rights on this side of the border.

In the book, there are explanatory notes on topics like the Fugitive Slave Law, as well as maps and diagrams. Greenwood even includes activities, such as how to make a cornhusk doll like the one Eliza leaves Johanna before rejoining her real family. Amazingly, Greenwood is able to include all this other informational material without messing up the story of the book.

I hope that you decide to read The Last Safe House by Barbara Greenwood, I think that many kids will love this book and enjoy reading it. The ending that Barbara Greenwood put in is amazing and I don’t think that I could have picked a better one. ☺

Thank you,